



Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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living manly religious faith, or even to equip them with an adequate ethical standard. If the Archdeacon (and there is no one more qualified for the task) were to supplement this article by pointing out the defects of our present system, and the best means of remedying them, he will earn the gratitude of parents, and help us towards the attainment of that ideal that he in all his writings so eloquently upholds.

In the *Forum*, for April, Miss Alice Zimmern traces the steps by which women have won the right to university education in different countries. Since her article was written I notice in the papers that Durham, which she spoke of as still wavering, has at last thrown open its degrees to women.

The *Journal of Education* is always of value to teachers. For parents, the article that appears to me of most interest this month is an "Assault on Latin," which should be read by those who are planning the course of study to be followed by their children, even if they, like myself, find it impossible to agree with the writer's conclusions.

There is a short article in *Chamber's Journal* on the learning of languages, which points out truly the advantages of this study and the difficulty of learning by the old method of endless paradigms, rules upon rules, with all their exceptions and dull exercises, but the writer appears never to have heard of the Gouin system, and advocates the persistent reading of simple tales, with the help of a dictionary, and the learning by heart of simple poetry. It need hardly be pointed out that a language will never become a *living* one to a student who attempts to master it in this fashion.

There is a long and appreciative notice of the Rev. H. C. Beeching's "Lyra Sacra," in the *Saturday Review* for May; and of his new volume of poems, "In a Garden," in the *Literary World* of the day before.

London members of the P.N.E.U. will rejoice to see the appointment of Prebendary Eyton to a Canonry in Westminster Abbey.

PATER JUNIOR.

THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.]

DEAR EDITOR,—I quite agree with the mother who objects to children having chocolate, especially at bedtime. A child's teeth should be most carefully brushed when put to bed with some antiseptic, to cleanse and remove any particles of food that may have lodged between them. *Salufer* is probably the best wash because non-poisonous. I have never given my children sweets of any kind, and when presents of this kind have been received they willingly exchange them with mother for fruit. Children can early understand they should eat the food that will give them the healthiest bodies. I often hear my little ones withholding things from their dollies because they would make them poorly.

E. LILLIE.

DEAR EDITOR,—Though mine is not a "much abler pen" it is taken up to answer the letter of Mrs. More.

On the question of chocolate giving there are naturally two opinions, and it would probably be wise for parents to agree to differ. Parents who *thoughtfully* give their children chocolate, feel that the language is unnecessarily strong when they are told that by so doing they "injure" their "children physically and morally."

It is a fact which has recently been much insisted on by the medical faculty that most children need a large quantity of heat-producing food. Generally children disliking fat like sweet foods. Nature, if not infallible, is a reliable guide. It remains, then, for parents to decide upon the best forms in which to give the desired food. That cocoa is valuable may be seen from the analysis of cocoa seeds:—50 per cent. of fat, 14 to 18 per cent. of starch, 13 to 18 per cent. of some form of albumen, 1.2 to 1.5 per cent. of theobromine, 3.5 per cent. of ash, .8 per cent. of sugar; and from the following remarks of W. J. Sinclair, M.A., M.D; "From its composition we might expect that cocoa, instead of being used as a beverage, would be esteemed a very nourishing food; and this was the popular opinion long before its chemical composition was known. The fat or butter is in a very available form, considering it is a vegetable fat the proportion of flesh-forming material is large, and the ash contains a very large amount of phosphate of potash, a fact which is too much overlooked," etc. "Cocoa has not as yet taken the place among our foods which its merits seem to deserve." And in another place Dr. Sinclair writes:—"Chocolate is cocoa in a slightly modified form." One might, therefore, infer that chocolate, instead of being "physically injurious," is exceedingly nutritious. My children frequently have it, and "not one has had a bilious attack." So far as my own experience goes the moral effect has been as satisfactory as the physical. The children have chocolate

with or immediately after a meal, and look upon it as food. I have never "studied" the "other properties," apparently injurious of chocolate and do not know how to begin. I shall, therefore, be glad to have any further light on the matter.

G. R.

DEAR EDITOR,—I happened to meet with a very charming book of Pianoforte Duets a short time ago. They are suitable for children from about eight to eleven years old, easy and tuneful and full of expression, and good music. My own little girls are delighted with them and enjoy playing them. The name of the book is "Der Kindergarten" Piano Duets, by Cornelius Gurlitt. Book II., Ed. 6592, price 1/-, published by Augener & Co.

I am, yours truly,

JESSAMINE.

RERES COTTAGE, BROUGHTY FERRY.

DEAR EDITOR,—In "Sunshine" for 1891 there are directions for making cardboard doll's furniture. We have got it.

Yours truly,

HELEN MAITLAND.

DEAR EDITOR,—As a member of the P.N.E.U., and also as headmaster of a preparatory school, may I be permitted to offer one or two suggestions to parents from the point of view of the schoolmaster, with regard to the education of young boys?

The educational struggle is so keen now-a-days that it behoves us as parents to see that our children start on the race of life unhandicapped. During the course of my experience I have so often had to contend with the fact that boys of 9 or 10 come to me, not only with little or nothing learnt, but even with that which they have presumably learnt imperfectly done or done quite in the wrong way, so that I have been obliged to pull down before beginning to construct. Now there are just one or two things which, if parents would only insist upon, would obviate all that and give the child a fair start.

1. See that to whomsoever you entrust your child to educate, *even from the first*, is capable and qualified to impart instruction in such a way that it is interesting to the pupil.

2. However short the time spent on "instruction" (and it must necessarily be short at first), let the child understand that *he* has to put forth all *his* best efforts in order to benefit, and not to expect everything to be done for him by the teacher. In fact make the child learn at once how to learn by concentrating all his mind upon the matter under consideration. This I consider a most important point, so many children never having been required to do their fair share, and so they acquire idle habits in lesson time hard to counteract later.

3. Let instruction be constant, daily, not by fits and starts, however little it be. If my experience can be of any use to parents in the matter of their *boys'* education, I shall be only too happy to answer any questions to the best of my ability.

H. E. M., M.A., OXON.

DEAR EDITOR,—Could any reader tell me in what book the following verses occur:—

"They've taken out the candle.
They've left me in the dark;
From the window not a glimmer
From the fire-place not a spark."

Also can any suggestion be given as to a good Comparative or Universal History abridged for children.

J. B. S. THOMPSON.

DEAR EDITOR,—I think the idea of teaching children in a more contemporaneous manner, if I may so say, is very good; but can you tell me any histories of Germany, Italian States, and Spain, that can be used, and are not too advanced for a boy of twelve. Also, if any one can give me a list of historical novels, such as "Talisman," that I can read out loud, at the same time, I should be glad.

Then I want advice from some mother of boys, as to the bringing up of mine, he is twelve, very affectionate, intelligent and has a sincere desire to be a "good boy," but he is very passionate for the slightest correction, he has taken lately to throwing himself on the floor, &c., &c., and answering very rudely. No doubt the best thing would be to send him to a good boarding school, but for the next year that will be impossible. What am I to do? I do not approve of whippings for a boy of his age, nor for that kind of fault. I have tried change of air and a complete holiday, thinking it might be physical, but to no good. I need not say I never *irritate* him, but punishment of some kind must be given. Can any one of experience help me?

A. M.

DEAR EDITOR.—One day in July, Ben was telling us about a deserted partridge's nest, with thirteen eggs in it, that he knew of, when Roger said something about cuckoos, and Ben said that there was one in a wagtail's nest in a quarry near. So the next morning we went to the quarry and got it. The nest was in a hole in a little projection of the side; it was beaten out nearly flat, and all the young wagtails had been kicked out. The cuckoo itself measured from six to seven inches in length, and about 9 inches across the wings. It was striped, with a few spots like a sparrow-hawk and had a large wide mouth, a *very* red tongue and chirped a great deal. After we had had it for a long time, Bertram went to Ashbourne and took the cuckoo with him. After some time it got quite tame, and used to sit on the cat's back with the window open, till at last one day it flew right out. It may come back this winter, but we don't know.

JACK HENRY HUTTON, aged 9.